



**PROVIDENCE HOUSING AUTHORITY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR MEETING: September 22, 2005**

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**PHA Conference Room**

**100 Broad Street**

**Providence, RI 02903**

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**CALL TO ORDER**

Vice Chairman Low called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

The Executive Director called the roll:

**Present**

Theodore Low  
Paul Waldman  
Jaime Castillo  
Dolores Cascella  
Dorothy Waters  
Paul Lewis  
Rita Williams

**Absent**

Dr. Thomas J. Anton (Excused)  
Raymond Murphy (Excused)  
Balbina Young

Seven members were present constituting a quorum.

**RESIDENTS' COMMENTS**

Commissioner Cascella, as a tenant and representative of Sr. Dominica Manor, expressed sincere appreciation of the Executive Director, Deputy Director and PHA staff members, most notably the maintenance staff, during a recent fire at Dominica Manor. Their response time was excellent as was the speediness of the repairs.

The Executive Director stated that the Deputy Director and staff work in cooperation with the Providence Fire Department providing Fire Safety Training to tenants on a regular basis. The Housing Authority also has an extensive Emergency Operations Manual, which covers standard operating procedures for every possible emergency situation.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES (June 23, 2005)**

Acting Chairman Low called for approval of the March 24<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes. Commissioner Waldman motioned for approval. Commissioner Cascella seconded the motion. A vote was taken. There being no opposition, Vice Chairman Low declared the minutes approved.

**VICE CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

**General Remarks**

The Vice Chairman stated that on this last day of a long summer, things seem to be going very well at the PHA. He took a moment to thank all Commissioners and staff for their well wishes and cards during his recent illness.

**Scheduled Annual Meeting**

The Executive Director will speak with the Chairman within the next week to schedule an exact date for the Annual Meeting. We will most likely move the October meeting to either November 3<sup>rd</sup> or November 10<sup>th</sup> because of the Thanksgiving holiday. Commissioners will be contacted once a date has been determined. Councilwoman Williams stated that she will be unavailable

on the 3<sup>rd</sup> due to a previously scheduled Council Meeting. The Director also mentioned that rather than a formal dinner as in past years, we will most likely hold a social hour following the meeting with spouses invited to attend. Vice Chairman Low stated that in light of the PHA's financial situation, a social hour rather than a formal dinner would be more fiscally responsible. Commissioners in attendance were in complete agreement.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- **Budget & Finance Committee**

Commissioner Castillo summarized the Budget and Finance Committee meeting for the board. He reviewed recent HUD news concerning provisions to the Public Housing Operating Program previously agreed to during the negotiated rule making process. He also mentioned the successful transmission of the 2005 Year-End Reports to REAC and the contract award to Fiore and Asmusen for the FY2005 Audit targeted for December 31<sup>st</sup>. See attached report for more detailed information.

- **Asset Management/Capital Improvements Committee**

Councilwoman Williams summarized the Asset Management/Capital Improvement Committee meeting. Some highlights are the approval of \$4,176,743 for the 2006 Capital Fund Budget, a decrease of 4.75% from last year. Bed bug problems continue and are being dealt with at a number of developments. Annual inspections of 192 fire extinguishers were completed in August. She also provided an update on projects recently completed and currently underway. See attached report for more detailed information.

- **Resident Services Committee**

Commissioner Waldman summarized the Resident Services Committee meeting. Some highlights are the receipt of \$90,000 from the Department of Mental Health to support educational elements of youth program; A partnership with Perry Middle School to serve 30 children in an after school program; the success of the summer youth program; and the training of PHA RSC's in changes to the Medicare Part D prescription program. See attached report for more detailed information

Vice Chairman Low commented that the summarized reports of sub-committee meetings provided to board members are very helpful and most informative.

### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

#### **General Comments**

The Executive Director stated that he was honored to be invited to Vice Chairman Low's investiture as Rhode Island's Assistant to the Secretary of the Army. He further stated that it was a wonderful event and that it is an honor to Ted and an honor to the Housing Authority to have him on our board. The director also mentioned that the general swearing Commissioner Low in was none other than General Honoree, who has been seen nightly as the person in-charge of events (hurricane) in New Orleans.

#### **Commissioner Packet Materials**

The Executive Director directed the Commissioners attention to several newspaper clippings included in their packet. The articles (attached) contain information on the following:

- An explanation on the Housing Authority's Kiddie Pool policy and the media controversy it caused
- The fire at Sr. Dominica Manor that took the life of a 74 year old resident
- Cities standing to loose housing choice vouchers
- Ralph Taylor of Times<sup>2</sup> Academy donating bikes to kids at Chad Brown

Goodbye to Employee

The Executive Director stated that this would be the last Board meeting for Planning/Policy Manager Christopher Delvaille, who has elected to leave the Housing Authority for a position in Colorado. He stated he would miss both Chris and the work he did for this agency. The PHA is a better place because he worked here.

Housing Authority Awards

The director then asked deputy director Domenic Schiano to report on his recent attendance at a Housing Authority Insurance meeting. Deputy Director Schiano recently attended, as a Board Member, Housing Authority Risk Retention Group (HARRG) Annual Meeting. HARRG provides the PHA with general liability insurance. Mr. Schiano accepted two awards on behalf of the Housing Authority. The PHA was awarded the Risk Retention Award for Fire Safety and the Innovation Award for our Risk Control Plan. Mr. Schiano went on to explain our fire safety programs and how we have increased tenant attendance/participation by combining training sessions with hot dog roasts at our elderly high-rise buildings and pizza parties at our family developments. He further stated the PHA would receive a \$28,000 credit on our general liability insurance and was presented with a dividend check for \$25,500.

Monthly Management Report Highlights

The Executive Director told the commissioners that the June, July and August Monthly Management Reports were available in their board packets. Highlights of the August report are as follows:

- 97.7% Occupancy
- 2,804 on Pre-Application Wait List
- 924 on Regular Wait List
- 94.7% Collection Rate
- 17% Refusal Rate for Apartment
- 7,075 New Work Orders
- Section 8 down 300 vouchers to meet budget restrictions

The Commissioners were invited to review the reports and to call if they had any questions concerning any of the information contained in the reports. Commissioners were asked to leave the August MMR at the PHA so errors on a chart can be corrected.

Public Housing Assessment System (PHAS) Status

- Management Operations Certification  
The Housing Authority is required to submit an annual Management Operations Certification to the Department of Housing and Urban Development as part of the four part REAC Public Housing Assessment System Score. The data was prepared and was submitted electronically to HUD via the internet in August of this year. An ex post facto resolution asking for approval to submit this Certification is before the board this evening. It's after the fact because the board was not scheduled to meet until after the deadline for submission.
- Financial  
Un-audited financials were submitted on time.
- Physical Inspections

The PHA is still waiting for HUD to schedule the physical inspections. We are hoping that because they have not yet done so.

- Resident Survey

Resident surveys were sent out by HUD approximately several months ago. The scores should be available on-line next month.

The board will receive a full presentation of our PHAS score at the annual board training retreat.

2006 Annual Operating Budget Update

The Executive Director stated the Housing Authority has heard nothing from HUD concerning changes in our pro-ration. He did read on their web-site that PHA's should receive a letter from their local HUD office on the final pro-ration, but was told not to expect too much more than the 89% of operating subsidy funding originally provided.

Report on Employee Terminations

Due to sever budget reductions, the Housing Authority had no choice but to layoff a number of employees. We have currently terminated five painters, three carpenters, one plasterer, and eight temporary laborers. Four vacant positions will remain vacant. The Office of Planning/Policy has been dissolved. Luckily, the manager has accepted a position out of state. One of the planners decided to return to school. The two remaining planners have accepted positions in the Leased Housing Department that are not funded through the operating budget. Twenty-five positions in total were eliminated. We anticipate two to three more in the next few months. However, if the unions do not agree to health insurance co-payments, there could be as many as twenty-five more layoffs.

Discussion of HUD Operating Fund Final Rule

The Operating Fund Final Rule was released on September 19<sup>th</sup>. A full presentation of the changes will be provided in detail at the next meeting. In all reality, the Housing Authority could not survive without the operating subsidy. At this time we believe these changes will be more positive than negative to the PHA and we will come out okay and receive additional operating subsidy.

Development Status

- Williams Woods Place

The Housing Authority has been working to resolve issues with Rhode Island Housing. They have asked us to eliminate our acquisition fee, but we are resisting doing this because we have already factored this amount into our budget. Once this is settled, we will schedule the groundbreaking ceremony.

**RESOLUTION(S)**

Resolution #4135: Resolution authorizing the Executive Director to submit to HUD-REAC our Annual Management Operations Certification as part of the Public Housing Assessment System. This resolution asks the board for approval, ex post facto, to submit to HUD REAC the Annual Management Operations Certification to the Department of Housing and Urban Development as required. Commissioner Williams moved for approval with Commissioner Lewis seconding the motion. After some discussion, a vote was taken. There being no opposition, Vice Chairman Low declared the resolution passed. [See attached]

**OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business to discuss.

**NEW BUSINESS**

The Executive Director stated that he had recently married. The Board of Commissioners congratulated him and sent best wishes to his bride.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Vice Chairman Low accepted a motion to adjourn from Commissioner Williams which was seconded by Commissioner Castillo to adjourn the meeting at 5:50 p.m.

Submitted by:

Approved by:

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Kimberly Dawley  
Recording Secretary

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Stephen J. O'Rourke  
Executive Director